Vanessa Bayer

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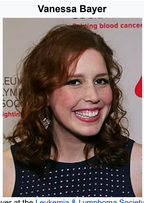
Vanessa Polster Bayer (born November 14, 1981) is an American actress and comedienne. She is best known for being a cast member on *Saturday Night Live* from 2010 to 2017, which earned her an Emmy nomination. Bayer also appeared in films such as *Trainwreck* (2015), *Office Christmas Party* (2016), *Carrie Pilby* (2016), and *Ibiza* (2018).



Vanessa Bayer

Bayer at the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society in 2015

Born	Vanessa Polster Bayer November 14, 1981 (age 39) Orange, Ohio, U.S.
Education	University of Pennsylvania
Occupation	Actress · comedian
Years active	2009–present

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Early life [edit source]

Bayer was born and raised in Orange, Ohio, a suburb of Cleveland, to a Reform Jewish family.[1] She is the daughter of Carolyn (née Polster) and Todd Bayer.[2] She has a brother, Jonah, who is a music journalist and the guitarist of the punk supergroup United Nations.[3][4]

At age 15, she was diagnosed with acute lymphoblastic leukemia (ALL). Bayer stated that while battling the disease, she discovered the meaning of comic relief. "I don't know if it made me funnier, but it was so amazing, how it made everything be O.K.", she said.[5]

Bayer graduated from Orange High School in 2000[6] and attended the University of Pennsylvania, where she majored in communication and French,[7] graduating in 2004.

Career [edit source]

As of 2012, Bayer was collaborating with her brother Jonah on the web series *Sound Advice* for Above Average. Bayer stars as Janessa Slater, a media coach who helps famous musicians change their image.[8][9][10]

While attending college, Bayer interned on the television shows *Sesame Street* and *Late Night with Conan O'Brien* and participated in the cast of *Bloomers*, an all-female musical and sketch comedy troupe.[11] Bayer was part of the all-Jewish cast of The Second City's stage show *Jewsical: The Musical*, a musical that presented a comedic take on Jewish life and culture.[12]

Bayer played the role of Kate Clark in the Chicago-based feature comedy *Off the Cuff* [citation needed]

Bayer performed improvisational comedy at Chicago's ImprovOlympic, where she trained with *SNL* castmate Paul Brittain[1] as well as the Annoyance Theatre and The Second City.[13]

In 2019, Bayer played Mia Cooper, the ex-wife of Taran Killam's character, in a recurring role on ABC's *Single Parents*. Starting in 2018, Bayer played Amy, a former baker who loses her job because of Karen and subsequently works for Karen's baseball team, in a recurring role on NBC's *Will & Grace*.

Saturday Night Live [edit source]

Bayer joined the cast of *Saturday Night Live* as a featured player on September 25, 2010. Beginning with the 2012–2013 season, Bayer was promoted to repertory status. She has been praised for her performance on the show, with HitFix calling her "one of the strongest members of the ensemble"[*verify*] and *Rolling Stone* calling her "*Saturday Night Live*'s secret weapon".[*verify*] In 2014, she was nominated for an American Comedy Award for her work on the show, [citation needed] and in 2017, she was nominated for a Primetime Emmy Award for Outstanding Supporting Actress in a Comedy Series.[14] Bayer departed *SNL* on May 20, 2017, after seven years on the show.[15][16] At the time of her departure, she was the show's all-time longest-serving female cast member with 149 episodes, but has since been surpassed by Kate McKinnon.

Her recurring characters include:

- Laura Parsons, a child actress always performing roles originally played by adults, including from *Forrest Gump*, *The Wolf of Wall Street*, *Brokeback Mountain* and *Dallas Buyers Club*
- Brecky, a former porn star who creates homemade commercials to obtain free luxury items alongside Cecily Strong
- Rebecca Stern-Markowicz, a co-host of *J-Pop America Fun Time Now*, which celebrates Japanese culture alongside Taran Killam and Jason Sudeikis
- Miss Meadows, an unrealistically perky teacher trying to connect with her delinquent students
- An unnamed director of talk show *Mornin' Miami*
- Jacob the Bar Mitzvah Boy, who appears on *Weekend Update* to perform a rehearsed speech (complete with forced jokes) about a given subject
- One of two workshop elves who perform their jobs poorly in the hope that their master will "punish" them, alongside Kenan Thompson
- Dawn Lazarus, an inept meteorologist who appears on *Weekend Update* and struggles to discuss the weather

Philanthropy [edit source]

Bayer was diagnosed with leukemia when she was a teenager. The Make-A-Wish Foundation granted her wish to send her family on vacation to Hawaii. In gratitude and recognition, Bayer is involved with the foundation. In 2015, she hosted the foundation's Evening of Wishes Dinner to help raise funds for wishes for children with life-threatening illnesses.[2][17]

In June 2019, she published the children's book *How Do You Care for a Very Sick Bear?*, which teaches children how to support friends with long-term illnesses.[18]

Filmography [edit source]

Film [edit source]

Vanessa Bayer film appearances

Year	Title	Role	Notes
2009	*Off the Cuff*	Kate Clark	
2010	*Stages of Emily*	Jocelyn	Short film
2012	*Adventures in the Sin Bin*	Superdawg Waitress	
2013	*Despicable Me 2*	Flight Attendant	Voice role
2015	*Trainwreck*	Nikki	
2016	*Carrie Pilby*	Tara	
	Office Christmas Party	Allison Parker	
2017	*The Polka King*	Bitsy Bear	
2018	*Ibiza*	Nikki	
2020	*Wander Darkly*	Maggie	
2021	*Barb and Star Go to Vista Del Mar*	Debbie	
2022	*DC League of Super-Pets*	TBA	Voice role

Television [edit source]

Vanessa Bayer television appearances

Year	Title	Role	Notes
2010–17	*Saturday Night Live*	Various	Series regular Nominated – 2014 American Comedy Award for Comedy Supporting Actress - TV Nominated – 2014 Online Film & Television Association Award for Best Female Performance in a Fiction Program Nominated – 2015 Online Film & Television Association Award for Best Female Performance in a Fiction Program Nominated – 69th Primetime Emmy Awards ("Outstanding Supporting Actress in a Comedy Series")
2011	*I Wanna Have Your Baby*	Connie	Episode: "Corrine & Jerry"
2012	*Sugarboy*	Chip's wife	
2013	*The Mindy Project*	Mary	Episode: "Sk8er Man"
2014	*Comedy Bang! Bang!*	Susan Armhold	Episode: "Patton Oswalt Wears a Black Blazer & Dress Shoes"
2014	*Wallykazam!*	Rockelle (voice)	Episode: "The Rock Can Talk"
2014–15	*Portlandia*	Various	Episodes: "Sharing Finances", "Late in Life Drug Use", "You Can Call Me Al" and "The Storytellers"
2015	*Man Seeking Woman*	Laura	Episodes: "Traib" and "Lizard"
2015	*The Awesomes*	Dr. Jill Stein-Awesome-Kaplan	4 episodes
2016	*Modern Family*	Marjorie	Episode: "Snow Ball"
2016–18	*Drunk History*	Various	2 episodes
2017	*The Simpsons*	Dr. Clarity Hoffman-Roth (voice)	Episode: "A Father's Watch"
2018	*Love*	Sarah	Episode: "Sarah from College"
2018	*Will & Grace*	Amy	Episode: "The Beefcake & the Cake Beef"
2019	*Single Parents*	Mia	2 Episodes
2019	*What We Do in the Shadows*	Evie Russell	Episode: "Werewolf Feud"
2019	*I Think You Should Leave with Tim Robinson*	Brenda	Episode: "Has This Ever Happened to You?"
2019	*Helpsters*	Rita Reader	Episode: "Rita Reader/Cody Gets a Cold"
2019	*Will & Grace*	Amy	Episode: "The Grief Panda"
2020	*Shrill*	Justine	Episode: "WAHAM"
2020	*Brooklyn Nine-Nine*	Officer Debbie Fogle	Recurring role, in season 7 episodes "Manhunter",[19] "The Jimmy Jab Games II", and "Debbie".[20]

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External links [edit source]

- Vanessa Bayer at IMDb
- Vanessa Bayer at Rotten Tomatoes

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Categories: 21st-century American actresses | 21st-century American comedians | American television actresses | American women comedians | American sketch comedians | Jewish American female comedians | Jewish American actresses | American impressionists (entertainers) | American voice actresses | Comedians from Ohio | Actresses from Cleveland | People from Cuyahoga County, Ohio | 1981 births | Living people

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